

# **MSPP**

## **A Curriculum for Grades 4–8 with Booster Sessions for Grades 9–12**

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# Overview of MSPP

MSPP is a comprehensive tobacco prevention program.

MSPP is a comprehensive tobacco prevention program that includes the following:

- A curriculum designed for students in grades 4–8
- A booster curriculum designed for students in grades 9–12
- A community action manual that provides ideas of how to address tobacco prevention community-wide through the involvement of parents, students, and other community members
- A parent brochure (sold separately) that motivates students' family members to be involved in this important issue. This parent brochure, as well as all parent letters, are available in Spanish for no charge online at [www.hazelden.org/mspp](http://www.hazelden.org/mspp).

The MSPP curriculum consists of six developmentally appropriate classroom sessions for grades 4–8 and four developmentally appropriate classroom booster sessions for grades 9–12.

Each session is forty-five to fifty minutes in length, fitting well into a normal class period. Educational strategies include cooperative learning groups, group discussions, role plays, reports, and goal setting. All activities are designed to actively engage the students rather than provide them with lecture-style lessons.

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Although designed in the Midwest, the program is appropriate for students in all regions of the United States, including urban and rural, in all socioeconomic groups, and across ethnicities. The peer-led component of MSPP, which uses same-age group leaders to facilitate many of the classroom activities, increases the appropriateness of the program for any group of students since students respond well to their peers. Same-age peers are more likely than teachers or outsiders to speak the same language and have the same perspective as the students.

## CURRICULUM GOALS AND RATIONALE

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### Goals

The overall goal of MSPP is to prevent tobacco use among adolescents. The program is specifically designed to help adolescents

- identify reasons why people start using tobacco.
- discover that nonuse of tobacco is normal behavior for adolescents.
- practice skills for resisting peer pressure to use tobacco.
- recognize the subtle and not-so-subtle messages in tobacco advertising.
- decide on their personal reasons for not using tobacco.

The intended outcomes are that adolescents will

- not begin to use tobacco.
- not continue to use tobacco if they have experimented with it.
- influence friends and family members not to use tobacco.

The booster sessions for grades 9–12 review these key concepts as well as address the connection between tobacco use and alcohol use.

### ***Rationale***

MSPP is based on a social influences model of prevention that focuses on those social and psychological factors that have been shown to promote the onset of tobacco use.

MSPP is based on a social influences model of prevention that focuses on those social and psychological factors that have been shown to promote the onset of tobacco use. Accordingly, the objectives of this program are to build on students' skills and behaviors rather than simply increase their knowledge, beliefs, or motivations.

The social influences theory recognizes that the social environment of teens (friends, family, and media influences, for example) is one of the most important factors in teens using tobacco. This theory focuses on developing teens' norms and skills so they can resist these influences to use tobacco. Curricula based on this model often cover resistance, decision-making, and communication skills. They focus on the negative, short-term consequences of smoking, advertising techniques, and positive social aspects of not using tobacco.

MSPP activities are designed to address the following social and psychological factors: peer pressure, advertising, and a lack of behavioral skills with which to resist these influences. Throughout the curriculum, students learn about the major social influences that encourage and support youth tobacco use.

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The rationale behind using peer leaders to lead the group activities is based on a realization that peers are often the most important factor in whether a teen begins or experiments with tobacco use. Adolescents may begin using tobacco to gain acceptance by their peers. Using student peer leaders in this program creates a norm that tobacco use is unacceptable. Through the peer-led activities, students will experience social support for not using tobacco, and they'll hear their classmates express approval for a tobacco-free lifestyle.

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